



2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings MT 59105
May 17, 2012

DECISION NOTICE

TO: Environmental Quality Council
Director's Office, Dept. of Environmental Quality
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks*

Director's Office	Lands Section
Parks Division	Design & Construction
Fisheries Division	Legal Unit
Wildlife Division	Regional Supervisors

Mike Volesky, Governor's Office *
Sarah Elliott, Press Agent, Governor's Office*
Montana Historical Society, State Preservation Office
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council
Montana Wildlife Federation
Montana State Library
George Ochenski
Montana Environmental Information Center
Wayne Hirst, Montana State Parks Foundation
FWP Commissioner Shane Colton*
Montana Parks Association/Our Montana (land acquisition projects)
Richard Moore, DNRC Area Manager, Southern Land Office
County Commissioners
Other Local Interested People or Groups
* (Sent electronically)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared for replacement of a natural gas pipeline near Bridger, Montana on the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone Fishing access Site (FAS). The proposal calls for a 138.1 foot Right-of-Way (ROW) to be added to the existing Williston Basin Pipeline Company natural gas pipeline ROW. This EA considers only the new 138.1 ROW request.

The pipeline will be installed utilizing boring technology, and surface disturbance along the 138.1 foot will be limited to the beginning and the end points of the boring process. The boring will be located at least 48 inches under the surface, with a deeper bore located under the Sand Creek Canal. Wherever the surface is disturbed, reclamation would occur following project completion. There will be no ground disturbance in Lot 6.

During the comment period, one comment was received expressing concern about vegetation removal associated with the project and subsequent maintenance. Vegetation along the pipeline site is dominated by grasses and a limited shrub component, with only limited deciduous vegetation along portions of the irrigation canal. Since boring technology will be utilized for the proposed 138.1 foot ROW, surface disturbance will not be an issue.

The draft EA was circulated for public comment from April 13 to April 25th to interested agencies, groups and persons. The EA was also posted on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' (FWP) website. Additionally, the EA was posted in both the Carbon County News on April 19th, 2012, and in the Billings Gazette on April 15th, 2012.

After reviewing this proposal and the corresponding comment, it is my decision to recommend approval of the project proposal to grant a 138.1 foot right-of-way easement for a pipeline upgrade. If you have any questions regarding this decision notice, you may email me at ghammond@mt.gov, or call me at 247-2951.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Hammond", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Gary Hammond
Regional Supervisor